



Senators Feinstein and Kyl Joins with 5 Western Senators to Call
for Doubling of SCAAP Funding in CJS Appropriations Bill
September 15, 2005

Washington, DC – U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Jon Kyl (R-AZ) today joined with 5 other western Senators in urging that the \$200 million for the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) in the Senate version of the FY '06 Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill be increased at least to the House level – \$405 million – when the bill goes to conference.

The funding, which reimburses states and localities for the costs of incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens, covers only a fraction of the funds expended by States for incarcerating undocumented aliens. Feinstein was joined in her request by Senators Pete Domenici (R-NM), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Ken Salazar (D-CO), and John Cornyn (R-TX).

In a letter to the Senators Richard Shelby and Barbara Mikulski – the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science – the Senators wrote:

“Immigration policy and control of our borders is an exclusively federal responsibility. Yet our State prisons and county jails are incurring the heavy cost of incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens. We strongly believe that local taxpayers should not have to foot the bill for incarcerating illegal aliens who have been convicted of criminal offenses in State and local jails. It is an unfunded federal mandate on the States that has real operational impact on local law enforcement.

As a body, the Senate has unanimously endorsed SCAAP time and time again. The Senate has passed reauthorization of the program by unanimous consent in this Congress and the 108th Congress. And, on March 17 of this year, the Senate agreed to a Sense of the Senate amendment to the Budget Resolution that SCAAP should be appropriated at a level of \$750 million.

While we recognize the difficulty in reaching that level, the House bill does provide \$405 million for SCAAP. As the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations move forward, we hope that you will agree to at least the House funding level in Conference.”

A Government Accountability Office report released in May 2005 indicated that California and three other states have been reimbursed less than 25 percent of what they spent for incarcerating undocumented aliens. The report shows that in FY 2003 California spent \$635 million and received only \$77 million from the Federal government and in FY 2002 California spent \$510 million and received only \$66 million from the Federal government.